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AT WHAT AGE SHOULD A BOY ENTER COLLEGE?

The following communication addressed to the editor of the present number of the Teacher, is commended to the careful attention of parents who have sons intending to enter college, and to those generally who have the immediate charge of the preparatory instruction in our classical schools. It is the tendency, at present, to urge scholars on beyond their real capacities,—to introduce them into studies evidently beyond their depth; and the result uniformly is, that the elementary branches are neglected, and superficial habits of study acquired. This fault is to be attributed partly to parents who, partaking of the spirit of the age, and supposing that mind, like matter, will yield to force, frequently importune teachers to shorten the period of elementary training, with great detriment to the pupil's success, and partly to teachers themselves, who are sometimes exceedingly ambitious to offer a large number of candidates each year for examination. It is to be hoped that the example recently set in some of our best classical schools, of lengthening the course of study to five or six years, will be speedily followed in all, and that "men" not "boys" will be offered for the discipline and instruction of college.

AMHERST, July 2d, 1855.

MY DEAR SIR: You inquire of me, at what age a boy should enter College. The question is one of no small importance, not only to the boy himself, but to the preparatory school and the college, to the cause of learning and the community.

My own observation and experience of college life, which, in one relation or another, has now extended over some twenty-five

years, is decidedly adverse to early admissions. The laws of Amherst College, in common, as I believe, with most of the other colleges of the older States, prescribe fourteen, as the earliest age at which one can be admitted to Freshman standing. This may, perhaps, be well enough for an extreme limit, for there are undoubtedly individuals, who at fourteen are already capable of entering college with safety, and pursuing all the studies, as they come along, with advantage. There are boys, who are as mature at fourteen, as others are at eighteen. And yet these are so manifestly exceptions, that it may well be doubted whether they should constitute the rule, or be set up, even indirectly, as the standard. If fourteen is prescribed as the limit, the danger is, that all will consider that as the proper age. It were better, perhaps, to designate the age at which, as a general rule, it is desirable to enter, and leave exceptional cases to be provided for, as they arise; or if a limit must be prescribed, it should be accompanied with the distinct statement, that it is better for boys, in general, to enter at a more advanced age.

That it is better, as a general rule, for boys not to enter college so early as fourteen, I have no doubt. Not a few instances have come under my observation in which the vanity of parents has plumed itself on entering their sons at the very earliest period at which they are admissible, and some instances, in which they have procured a special vote of the Corporation, dispensing with the law in the case of their sons and authorizing their admission at a still earlier age. And the result has almost always been unhappy. Doubtless the evil was aggravated in these instances, by the foolish vanity of the parents, producing in their sons that pride which precedes a fall. But where there has been no such weakness, those who enter the lists very young, seldom hold out in the race with their older and more mature competitors. They set out bravely; during Freshman year, they are, perhaps, favorite candidates for the valedictory. But early in the Sophomore year, many fall out of the course, not a few others fail to round the goal at the end of the year, others still fall behind in the Junior studies; and most of them come in for a very inferior share of Senior triumphs and the honors of Commencement. In view of such facts, college officers are often tempted to wish that they may never see any more "*boys*" present themselves for examination. College is no place for mere boys. Its duties and its dangers, its trials and its toils, its course of study and its whole organization and manner of life, demand men;—if not men in age and stature, yet men in physical, mental, and moral stamina.

The studies now pursued in American Colleges, extend over the whole wide and ever widening range of literature and

science, and comprehend the most abstruse and difficult, as well as the loftiest and grandest subjects, that have ever exercised the human intellect. Whether prosecuted for their own sake, or for the sake of the discipline which they impart, they require to be pursued with the most intense application of all the mental powers. They must be studied so as not only to master the facts, but to comprehend their mutual relations and the principles which they involve. The study of languages, for example, is not (as boys usually make it, and as "children of a larger growth" sometimes represent it) the study of mere words. It is the study of thoughts and things—of the greatest and best thoughts that men have ever uttered, and so, indirectly, of the greatest and best things that God has created on earth. It is the study of reason and speech,\* those characteristic attributes of our race, in their inseparable connection with each other, and the study of them after the Baconian method, by observing how men *have* developed and employed these divine gifts; and so it is the study of history and philosophy, of human nature and mankind. Classical studies should be commenced in boyhood, when the memory is ready and retentive. The foundation should then be laid in a perfect knowledge of forms and constructions. But the chief end of such studies is lost, if they are *finished* and laid aside, before the mind has become sufficiently reflective and comprehensive to consider them in these higher and wider relations.

In like manner, the mathematics are not merely a dry collection of theorems and problems—not merely a dead body of rules and formulas; but as the very name imports, they are the basis of all science and all art, the informing principle of music, poetry and the arts of design, not less than of chemistry, astronomy and the physical sciences, and the invisible frame-work of the material, if not also, (as Pythagoras taught) of the spiritual universe. The physical sciences, while they embody some of the most masterly productions of human genius, are also expressions of the attributes and thoughts of God. The several branches of mental science, while they make us acquainted with ourselves, also determine the limits and methods of all knowledge, and furnish the clew to discovery and progress, not more in anthropology, than in cosmology and theology.

Such, in brief, are the principal studies pursued in college, and they are clearly no boy's play. They are sufficient to task the largest powers of the human intellect. They are only marred and mangled and *effectually finished*, if finished in mere boyhood.

\* Hence the term Philology: *φίλος* and *λογία* which includes both reason and speech.

We come to a similar conclusion when we look at the mental discipline, which, more than the mastery of literature and science, is the primary object of a college education. The college is the last in the series of properly *educational* institutions. On leaving college, the young man's "*education* is completed," and he enters upon the study of a profession. Now it requires no argument to prove, that before the discipline of the mental powers is finished, those powers themselves should have attained to some degree of maturity, and also that the judgment, under whose control the work of discipline is to be accomplished, should have become in a measure ripe? The college student is emphatically left to his own judgment,—thrown upon his own resources. When he enters college, if not before, he must leave the parental roof, the command of parents, the counsels of friends, the influences of home, and become, in an important sense, his own master, choose his own associates, regulate his own house, and direct his own manner of life. This involves a weighty responsibility in regard merely to bodily health and habits, and the culture of the intellect. How much more weighty, when the social habits, the moral character, the religious principles, the health of the heart, and the welfare of the soul are taken into consideration! Parents and friends can, now, only advise. Teachers look on, not indeed at so great a distance, but still from without that charmed circle, in which he lives and moves and has his being. College students constitute a community by themselves and of their own kind, with manners, customs, laws, and I had almost said a language of their own, with peculiar advantages, and those very great, but with peculiar temptations, and those also very trying, with facilities for propagating influence and for getting and doing either good or evil, such as belong to scarcely any other community in the wide world. Meanwhile conflicting motives sweep the surface of this little community, and counter currents stir it to its lowest depths. Every influence that can proceed from this world or the next, falls upon them. Every passion, from the merest love of self to the purest love of God, contends for the mastery. Competitions with fellow-students, as severe as those which are waged on the floor of Congress, or in any other arena of human strife, invite them to enter the lists against each other. Or they may strive for the mastery over self, and thus win triumphs more noble than those of the gymnast or the ascetic. Or yet again they may struggle to obey the will of God, and do good to men in a field of usefulness which the missionary might well covet,—in a theatre of glory, such as never dazzled the eye of any poet or orator of antiquity. Or, on the other hand, they may sit in the bower of ease, or enter the halls of forbidden pleasure, or vie with each other in the arts of dis-



sipation and seduction with a freshness of appetite and fervor of the passions, known only to clubs of youthful votaries. It is under such circumstances and such influences, that the boy (if he is a boy when he enters college) is to decide for himself, and, as a general rule, to make the final decision, whether he will do well or ill, do right or wrong, do something worthy of himself and the reasonable expectation of his friends, or do nothing, or over-do and break down his constitution, perhaps, past recovery.

From this simple statement of facts, two or three inferences follow, as obvious and unavoidable conclusions.

1. No one should be exposed to such an ordeal, till he has formed habits of study and adopted principles of action, that may be regarded as somewhat firm and fixed,—that will not be likely to yield to the first breath of temptation which falls upon them. To send a boy to college who has no habits of study, and no love of learning for its own sake, while, at the same time, he has no steadfast purposes of right, no fixed moral or religious principles;—to send him, as too many parents do, against his will, though it be to the most Christian college in the land, is to put him on the highway to ruin. It will be no thanks to the parent, if he fails to come to some bad end.

2. He should not be put to such a test, without considerable maturity of intellectual powers. The mind should be taxed, but not overtaxed—exerted, but not strained, in order to the healthy development of its faculties. To require of a boy a man's task, is to dwarf his intellectual, as surely as his bodily growth and strength. The college, as we have already said, is the last stage of the *education* properly so called; and the last stage of education should be coincident with the last period of youth, when the mind attains its full growth and stature. In earlier boyhood, neither are the faculties capable of bearing the necessary strain, nor is the judgment competent to give the right direction.

3. He should not be subjected to such a pressure, till he has nearly or quite attained his physical growth, nor without a good degree of bodily health and strength. The college course imposes no small tax on the physical constitution. The brain is stimulated and strained to its utmost tension in the direct and almost exclusive service of the mind; and the nervous energies are diverted, drawn off, drained out, if we may be allowed the expression, from all the bodily organs in indirect contributions to this reigning power. To subject the system to such a drain, while, at the same time, its energies are nearly all required to sustain the rapid growth of the body, is little short of suicide. The parent who imposes such a tax on his son, may expect to destroy his health, and shorten his life, if not also to

sacrifice interests dearer than life—to impair his intellect, ruin his character, and wreck all his prospects for this life, with, perhaps, all his hopes for the next. Whereas, if he will wait till his son has arrived very nearly at the growth of all his powers and faculties, and wants only the last touch of the forming, strengthening, and finishing hand of education, he will have every reason to hope, that he will come out a whole man, with a sound mind in a sound body, under the supreme control of an enlightened conscience and a pure heart.\*

The age which will meet all these demands better than any other, as a general rule, is perhaps seventeen or eighteen. If there are exceptions to the rule, as there are to all rules, my own judgment and my own observation would lead me to say, that far more should enter after than before this standard age. The average age of those who enter Amherst College is as high as twenty or twenty-one; and more and higher honors, both in college and in public life, have been won by those who have exceeded, than by those who have fallen below the average.

The age which we have fixed upon, from regard to the welfare of the student, is also well adapted to secure the other interests involved. It gives time and scope,—the *right* time and the *proper* scope,—for the family, the preparatory school, the college and the community, each to impart its benefits and to receive its dues.

It leaves the boy at home under the control of parents, and the influence of brothers, sisters, friends,—the very best place and the very best influences in the world, if the home is at all what it ought to be,—while his body, mind and heart are most rapidly growing, and his habits and principles are forming. And it is with a wise reference to this home influence, as well as to the proper education of all her children, that old Massachusetts has provided by law, that every town of any considerable size shall establish a High School, in which the children of the town may be fitted for college, or may acquire a thorough English education, while they yet remain under the parental roof. Parents little know to how much pains and expense they subject themselves in exiling their sons and daughters from home only to injure the completeness of their education.

The age suggested leaves time for the preparatory school to do its work and do it well—to see that the common English branches are thoroughly mastered, and that the youth goes to college well trained in the elements of the Greek and Latin

\* Such a complete man will accomplish more for himself and his generation in one year than a half or a third of a man will in two or three; at the same time, he will be likely to live longer in the *practice* of a *profession*, which he enters at thirty, than one broken down by ill-advised haste, who commences at twenty-one.

languages. In ordinary cases, it affords none too much time for a perfect preparation. But if perchance a boy is really well prepared at an earlier age, let him spend a year or two in strengthening his physical constitution, or, if that be quite perfect, in acquiring one or more of the modern languages. Then let him go over again with a careful review of all his preparatory studies; and the impulse with which he thus enters college, will bear him on with an increased rapidity and power through the whole collegiate course.

The college has quite as great, if not even a greater interest at stake, in the mature age of those who enter. If the Presidents and Professors might safely calculate on having to do, not with reluctant, half-formed, heedless boys, but with full-grown, strong, and earnest young men, well trained in all the preparatory studies, and eager to enter on the new and untrodden paths of learning, as one after another they shall open before them, this alone were sufficient to revolutionize the course of study, to transform the manner and spirit of their instructions, and to lift the college up to a higher platform of intellectual and moral culture.

Lastly, the cause of letters and the community would reap the benefit of the change. We should see fewer boys in the pulpit, at the bar, and in all the public walks of life. Young America would have an older head put upon his young shoulders. Older and wiser men would wield the power of the pen, of the press, of the government, and of public opinion. As in college, so in all that is done or directed by educated men, there would be *more power*, and it would be *better regulated*.

Precocious development is every where—whether in the body or the mind, in the individual or the State—more or less unhealthy development. This is pre-eminently the disease and the danger of our country. Like a raging fever, it is making havoc with the health and life, the minds and hearts of our youthful countrymen. Perhaps the first step towards a cure would be to check it in the educated men, the leading minds of the community. The public men of Israel did not enter upon their official duties till the age of thirty; and even the man who appeared in Judea eighteen centuries ago as a model for our race, conformed to this usage. Were the same limit imposed on all who hold stations of power and influence in our age and country, the whole spirit and soul and body of American society would be in a far more healthy condition.

W. S. TYLER.

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## THE RELIGIOUS TEACHING OF THE SCHOOL-ROOM.

It would be very absurd if sectarian strife should banish from our school-rooms that on which every Christian sect is based, viz., Christianity itself. Such a result would be equally prejudicial to the contending parties and to our educational interests. One denomination had far better submit to see itself outstripped in influence, than that the principles of a common faith should have no place in the instructions of the school-room. If Christianity is not carefully taught to children, religious doctrines of all kinds will very soon lose their influence among men. Christian people, therefore, will desire that the Christian religion be taught to childhood; and if this is to be done by a person of a different denomination from me, who will certainly present the truth in the color given it by his own denominational views, this is of but little consequence so long as I know that he is a Christian who will not falsify the *great* doctrines of the Christian scheme.

These principles will be admitted by most. The unbeliever in Christianity, alone will prominently object to their application, and yet even his better judgment must yield conviction here upon an enlarged and liberal view. In objecting to Christianity, we object to education itself, for it is not too much to affirm that all the properly educational influence by which we are to-day surrounded, and all the true education of the race in any age, have been owing to Christianity. Before the appearance of the Christian religion there was no such thing as a true education known. True, the world cannot be said to have been at that time in utter ignorance; much had been discovered and was known in art and science and philosophy. Neither can it be affirmed that there was then no means of instruction, for we find the frequent existence of schools in which the young were taught the principles and the results of knowledge. But education in the only proper sense of the term, education as a leading out, as an unfolding of the man, and this for no other reason than because of the man's own excellence and worth, we do not find amid all the knowledge nor amid all the schools of antiquity. The Christian religion first introduced it to the world.

The only ground for objection to this affirmation lies in the facts of Grecian history. It may be contended that in Greece education was cultivated according to its high ideal, long before the birth of Christ. But, while it is fully admitted that the Greeks stood upon a very high point of refined culture, that they had carried out art and science and philosophy to a very wonderful extent, yet must the affirmation be repeated, that



education in its true sense, was not found among them. No part of the culture of the Greek was for his own sake, but all of it was directed for the sake of the state. The Greek was taught and cultivated that he might be made a better citizen, and not that he might become a nobler man. This is the idea which underlay all that which, in a false sense, is termed Grecian education. Everything in it was directed towards the state, and never stopped short with the individual. True, this general idea had its specific development in different forms among the different Grecian states, varying in each one according to what was fancied to be the predominant want or interest of the state, but never losing its distinctive feature of cultivating the individual for the citizen, and not for the man. Education thus dates its first appearance among men after the coming of Christ and the introduction of His religion.

In subsequent time, education has had a hold upon men, and progressed just as Christianity has strengthened and brightened. We might have expected that even after the religion of Christ had been nominally introduced among the barbarous hordes who overran Europe and broke up the Roman Empire — ages might elapse before they should even feebly understand the application of its principles. They were savages who might challenge comparison, for brutal ferocity and violence of passion, with any races the world has known, and who were almost on a level with the lowest in stupidity of intellect. And yet, not three centuries after the nominal conversion of Clovis, we find the basis for the University of Paris laid by Charlemagne; and from the fact that Professors were invited to his court from England, Ireland, and Germany, we infer that education had followed the introduction of Christianity in these countries even earlier than in France. Christianity has since kept on its progressive working, and education has followed it, with equal pace, till the present day. So now, the teaching of the school-room must be religious and Christian, in order that the school-room itself may be sustained. This should be advocated both by Christians and unbelievers, upon both religious and educational grounds. s.

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A GRAMMATICAL PLAY ON THE WORD THAT.

Now *that* is a word which may often be joined,  
 For *that that* may be doubled is clear to the mind,  
 And *that that that* is right, is as plain to the view,  
 As *that that that that* we use, is rightly used too,  
 And *that that that that that* line has in it, is right  
 In accordance with grammar, is plain in our sight.

In the above lines, the word *that* is used in perfect accordance with the rules of grammar.—*Albany Express*.

## ON THE WRITING OF COMPOSITIONS.

[The following article consists of extracts from a lecture recently delivered by W. W. Wheildon, Esq., to the pupils of the Charlestown High School. We regret that we cannot obtain for publication the entire lecture. It contains so much that is practical, exposes so many of the faults of young writers, and gives such clear directions for the formation of a good style, that it would be a highly valuable contribution for the perusal of those who have to do with this important branch of Education. ED.]

IN writing a composition, the *subject* should first be well understood ; that is, the writer should have a clear idea of the matter to be written about, and upon which he intends to express his thoughts, his opinions, or his feelings. Then he is prepared to *think*, to invent and combine his ideas upon it : what is its nature, what are its characteristics, how is it affected or influenced, or what influences it exerts ; what views may be taken of it, or how may it be illustrated ; what advantages flow from it, or how shall it be enforced or established. Is it a narrative, in which we detail events, incidents, circumstances ? Is it a theme for reflection ? What are our views of it ? Is it sentimental or moral — of the heart or of the mind ? Whatever it be, its nature should be distinctly understood ; its character fully comprehended. In this, the advice of the teacher, or of a friend, may be with propriety desired. No better aid can be sought, in any composition, than conversation with another upon the theme. Mind, even if uncultivated itself, is the best cultivator of the mind. By collision both may gain thoughts which neither possessed before. Like the flint and steel, neither alone can produce a spark, but when brought into contact, mind with mind, scintillations of the purest ray are the result. They act upon each other, excite each other, correct false impressions, enlarge the views and expand the intellect. The very mention of a theme excites some thoughts in the mind of every one competent to think. A word is often full of suggestion ; as Education, Happiness, Gratitude, Grief, Religion, and others, and there are many ways to treat such themes. Or take another class of words, representing material things, as a Church, a Ship, a Monument, a Dwelling-house, or a Railroad : each of these words presents a picture to the mind, and we could think a long time about any one of them, and things associated with them. What, for example, is our idea of a *Ship*, its management, guidance and government, on the ocean, by day and by night, with the stars above and the depths below ; the winds, the waves, the progress over the trackless waters ; the domestic habits, the occupations and social gatherings of those on board, in the long day or the lowering night ?

All these things are suggested to the mind, and many more, by the mere mention of the subject. Or take the word *Grief*,—what scenes of sorrow are conjured up in the thoughtful mind, by that sad word! It stirs the deepest emotions of the heart, awakens all the sympathies of the soul, and calls into activity the humanities and the divinity within us. Or if the word be *Music*, the mind turned upon itself, with no sound upon the ear, the imagination may revel in harmony: the stirring drum, the piercing fife, the blast of the bugle, the softer melody of the flute, the gentle breathing of the æolian,—these may all be heard in the fancy, and attune the heart to gladness. The unwritten music of nature, the sighing of the wind, the patter of the rain, the booming roar of the ocean, or the softer carol of the birds about our pleasant homes, the hum of insects, the prattle of the brook,—these all come thronging upon the fancy as we have heard them in our experience, forgetting to prize them among the blessings of life, almost because our Heavenly Father has bestowed them upon all his creatures alike! Thus every subject, even a word, so wonderful is our language, is suggestive of its associations, and leads the mind, even of the uncultivated, into a train of thought more or less original with itself, and more or less vigorous. \* \* \*

When we consider the great fact that it requires about one half the time of an ordinary life, to acquire a tolerably good education, it becomes important to know, at some time or other, the object of such a disposition of our time. What do we gain by it? What would we be without it? What are we with it? I do not, of course, in these remarks, propose to discuss or answer these pertinent and suggestive questions, but it is desirable that they should be considered by us all. To the cultivated mind they are already answered. To the mind seeking cultivation they are in the process of development. To the mind desiring knowledge, and deprived of the nutriment it seeks, they are as apparent as the want of food to a starving man. Helpless as we are in infancy, devoid of intelligence or thought, having no sensation but that of pain, no impulses but those of instinct, a desire to acquire knowledge is one of our earliest manifestations, as it is one of the last that we encourage. The most dependent and helpless of living creatures,

“Frail creature as he is, helpless as frail,”

man begins to learn almost with his first breath; and whatever may be forgotten, as years advance, it can scarcely be said that he ceases to learn until it can be said that he ceases to live.

“Many are our joys  
In youth! but oh! what happiness to live  
When every hour brings palpable access  
Of knowledge, when all knowledge is delight,  
And sorrow is not there.”

WORDSWORTH.

The longest life does not suffice for the acquisition of all knowledge. So broad is the field of human wisdom, open to all alike! So large and expansive are the faculties and capabilities of the human mind! So important is education to a full and perfect man, that it may almost be said, could any of the brute races attain it, they would break down the great barrier between the races, and man himself might become the inferior animal. As it is, the remark is sometimes heard of an intelligent animal, that he knows more than some men! It is greatly to be feared that such severe judgment may have some foundation in truth.

I do not intend by these didactic remarks, to advocate or encourage authorship. There is less need of authors than of thinkers; less need of them now than in the time of Dr. Johnson, who thought, from the multiplicity of scribblers who annoyed him, that

“All Bedlam or Parnassus is let out,  
Fire in each eye, and papers in each hand,  
They rave, recite and madden round the land.”

Things in this respect have not greatly improved since his time, neither as regards numbers or excellence. The press is burdened with its *light* literature; the public confused with a superabundance of books, and the good sense and good taste of the community vitiated by a flood of cheap productions. But I would encourage an ardent and practical cultivation of the intellect, not alone in the acquisition of knowledge, but in its use; a power of *thought*, and of easily and accurately communicating our ideas; a facility in the application to our daily life of the knowledge we gain; for intelligence and learning, however varied, are of little worth if perpetually locked up in our own brain. We confirm and establish the knowledge we have acquired by using it, and gain new ideas and insight into new principles by discourse with intelligent people. The excellences of our education, or its deficiencies, are shown in our conversation, even in our most trivial remarks, and in our most familiar correspondence. Our intellectual cultivation, whatever it may be, is drawn out of us in our daily lives; it cannot be hid, it must be known, and it is the evidence we have, better than gold or genealogy, of our claims to refinement and regard. With no such evidence to offer, or only that of outside appearance and doubtful validity, we must fall into the broad ranks of the rude and uncultivated, undeveloped as men, unfruitful in our highest estate. The word cultivation is the exact and expressive synonyme for education, and as a figure of speech, is particularly illustrative and forcible. If the ground be well and assiduously cultivated, a good growth and product-



ive crops reward the labors of the husbandman ; if the ground be not well tilled, weeds usurp the dominion, absorb the nutriment of the soil, and ripen the seed for a still more abundant growth, weeds all, weeds continually. So with the parterre of the intellect : cultivation improves the soil and renders of value the harvest ; neglect weakens the intellect, impoverishes the heart, and makes life a dreary waste, or a tangled web of folly and crime, not only without solidity, but wanting the mere gild of gaudiness.

Exaggeration in composition, or in conversation, is an impropriety, and so common a fault that it requires a watchfulness over our words, and a decided effort of our intelligence to avoid it. It is not a little unfortunate for our good sense, our taste, and our "mother tongue," that this evil is in some degree sanctioned by the canons of fashion. It is truly a fashionable folly, and like some other follies, having the same inexorable authority for its continuance, is altogether evil in its influence. Potent as fashion is in our day, it does not seem to have been regarded by the ancients either as a virtue to be deified, or as an evil to be demonized. It may well be made symbolical, in our time, as a modern giantess, composed of all qualities and compounded of all absurdities and follies which afflict our race ; frail, fickle, and faithless, neither to be trusted nor followed—nor yet to be rejected and disobeyed. Fashion in literature, from her well known vagaries, is dangerous to our simplicity, and detrimental to our tastes. The purity of our language, and the proprieties of our conversation, are not safely to be entrusted to the erratic habits of the vagrant Fashion. Exaggerations and extravagances, in composition and conversation, however sanctioned by custom, commended by fashion, or countenanced by what is falsely called "politeness," are always to be avoided. It is safer, and in better taste, to shade down and soften our expressions, rather than to make them gaudy or high colored, oftentimes at the expense of truthfulness.

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#### A FINANCIAL QUESTION.

Which will cost the most money, — the education of the child, or the ignorance of the man ? We cannot avoid paying the tax for one or the other.

[For the Massachusetts Teacher.]

## COMMEMORATION AT OXFORD.

EDINBURGH, June 25, 1855.

DEAR SIR:—Perhaps you may be interested in reading a brief account of the exercises at Oxford University during the past week. A visit to Oxford, where is the most ancient institution for learning in England, is well worth the making at any season, and I was peculiarly fortunate to be there during the week of the commemoration, as it is termed. On Monday evening of this week there is a procession of boats, belonging to the students of the different colleges—nineteen in all—each boat having the distinctive mark and banner of its college, and the young men who row it being dressed in a particular uniform. These boats followed each other in this procession on the Isis in the order in which they came out of a boat race held some days before, the one which then gained the prize taking the lead; and when arriving at a certain point it stops, while the others pass by and pay it a salute; meanwhile the other students of the different colleges standing on the banks of the river or in other boats, cheer the boats of their respective colleges, as they pass. This scene attracts a large number of spectators, and amid the music of the bands and the cheers of the students is quite an enlivening one. On the next day there is a charity sermon preached by some bishop, a flower show upon the grounds of one of the colleges in aid of some charity, and also various private entertainments in the evening.

Wednesday is the day of commemoration, the exercises of which take place in the theatre, a building belonging to and within the enclosures of one of the colleges, and rarely used on any other occasion. It is built in the form of a horse-shoe, and contains a large ground floor, where are admitted at their exercises the Masters of Arts, and persons introduced by them, gentlemen and sometimes ladies, who are obliged to stand, there being no seats; a ladies' gallery, to which ladies are admitted only for tickets,—and these are of course in great demand and difficult to obtain,—and also an upper gallery, where students who have tickets are admitted. This upper gallery will accommodate about one thousand students, or something less than one half of the number belonging to the different colleges. The Chancellor's chair is placed in the centre of the circulum, and nearly on the level with the ladies' gallery, and at each side are places for the officers of the University, and the Doctors of Laws. There are also on the right and left of the Chancellor's chair pulpits for the speakers. The theatre will accommodate over four thousand persons; and on this

occasion, Wednesday, June 20th, it presented a very brilliant appearance. The doors were opened at ten o'clock, and immediately the students' gallery was crowded with its full complement. The students consider this their Saturnalia, and have a sort of prescriptive claim to be disorderly. They commence at once a series of cheers or of groans, as some of their number announce a popular or an unpopular name; or as an officer of the University enters, he is either cheered or hissed, or sometimes both. The head of one of the colleges, who was present the whole hour before the services commenced, was frequently called out by the name of Big Ben. Then some would cheer the weather, it being the first fair day for a week; the ladies in white, or the ladies in blue,—or the ladies with no bonnets, referring to the very small bonnets which are now worn, there being none present without any. Among the names which received the most hearty cheers at this time were those of Lord Derby and Lady Derby; and of the public men whose names were ill-received, were Palmerston and Brougham. In this way for a whole hour their lungs were incessantly exercised. At eleven o'clock precisely the front door was opened, and a way being made through the crowd standing upon the ground-floor, a procession not very numerous enters, headed by Lord Derby the Chancellor, having a magnificent robe embroidered with gold, and followed by the officers of the University in black gowns, the bishops in their robes, and the Doctors of Laws in red or white gowns. The organ playing, and the whole audience singing, standing, "God save the Queen." The Chancellor opened the convocation in a Latin speech, announcing the names of the persons upon whom the council proposed to confer the honorary degrees of Doctors of Laws. After reading the whole number, he then puts to the vote of the convocation the name of each separately. The students, although they have no vote in the matter, persist in having a voice, and they cheer or hiss as their whims incline them. The first name announced was that of Mr. Buchanan our Minister; a few of the students cried out "no," "non placet;" one sung out "Yankee Doodle,"—but the Masters of Arts and other members of the convocation, together with the Chancellor, cried out "order," and the matter was carried with quite a respectable cheer. The same course was pursued when most of the other candidates were announced; the only names which were received with hearty and unmixed cheers, in which the whole audience joined, were those of Tennyson, the Poet Laureate, and of Sir De Lacy Evans and Sir John Burgoyne, the heroes of the Crimea.

After the assent of the convocation is given to the conferring of the degrees proposed, the candidates enter the theatre in their appropriate gowns, preceded by an officer of the Univer-

sity, who, standing in the centre of the area in front of the Chancellor, presents to him, in a Latin speech, each candidate in order, upon whom the Chancellor confers the degree, and the candidate then walks up to the Chancellor, shakes hands with him, and takes his seat by his side among the doctors ; the students all along keeping up their performances. This ceremony is the most interesting part of the commemoration exercises. The audience have a fine opportunity of seeing the distinguished persons thus honored, and, with the exception of the noise and uproar made by the students, the ceremony is a very appropriate one. The Chancellor has a fine voice and presides in a very dignified manner. He, however, could not help occasionally smiling at some of the jokes let off by the students, and when he did so, the expression about his mouth reminded me very much of that of Chief Justice Shaw, when enjoying heartily a joke ; and indeed his lordship bears a sufficient resemblance to the venerable Chief Justice of Massachusetts, to pass for his younger brother. After the conferring of the honorary degrees, one of the Professors recited a Latin oration, in which allusion was made to the glories of Alma and Balaklava, received of course with cheers ; but soon the students waxed tired, and by their noise abbreviated the delivery,—the Professor, closing with a remark about time failing, sat down amid hearty cheers at his concluding. Then were recited by the successful competitors, the prize performances, consisting of a Latin Essay, a Latin Poem, an English Essay, and an English Poem. They were indifferently recited, but strange to say, the students paid pretty fair attention to them. These being over, the Chancellor announced that the convocation was dissolved, and thus ended the public exercises of commemoration. The services are much shorter in duration,—being less than two hours,—and they had, of course, far less of variety and public interest than those of our college commencements ; the part played by the undergraduates is an anomaly fortunately not known among us.

In the afternoon, there was an extraordinary occasion, the laying of the first stone of a new museum about to be erected by the University ; fifty thousand pounds having been appropriated for that purpose from its general funds. The arrangement for this ceremony was very well made. A platform was erected over the foundation of the proposed building, and was covered with an elegant awning, and served as the stage for the Chancellor and distinguished guests. In front was an enclosure reserved for ladies and gentlemen provided with tickets of admission, over which the flags of the different nations were displayed, and among which were two of the American at opposite corners. The corner course upon which the ceremonial stone



was to be laid projected through an opening in the platform, and was sufficiently elevated to be seen by the whole assembly. After the reading of a prayer especially prepared for the occasion, by the Chancellor, and the singing of a hymn by a large choir, the Chancellor proceeded to lay the stone, and he seemed to spread the mortar with his silver trowel, and to apply the square and level in a workmanlike manner. He then delivered an address, in which he declared the object of the University in erecting this proposed costly edifice to be, to afford greater facilities for the study of natural science and the practical arts, and declared it was their intention eventually to confer degrees upon the proficient in these studies. He concluded his address with an eloquent appeal to the friends of the University and of learning to give their endowments to this new enterprise, and announced that the Queen had signified to him her intention to defray the expense of procuring fine statues of distinguished men in natural science, to ornament the new building. The address was much applauded, and the services terminated with the singing of the National Anthem. Thus it will be seen that Oxford is now making a noble effort to do what our University at Cambridge, by the benefaction of Hon. Abbott Lawrence, was enabled some years since to accomplish: to engraft upon the old system of collegiate study a scientific and practical course.

There is much to interest one in the different colleges at Oxford, in their libraries, galleries of paintings, museums, and beautiful walks and enclosures. The courtesy and attention shown by the officers to stranger visitors are admirable; and I shall always remember with pleasure the three days spent at Oxford.

G. W. W.

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### METHOD OF STUDYING GREEK.

[From the dissertation of the celebrated Wythenbach, Professor of Greek at Leyden, printed in the preface to his *Selections from Greek Historians*.]

I MUST now say something of the *preparation* of your exercises; in which, if your lexicons lead you into any mistakes, I shall correct them in your recitations. Now at my lectures, you will not be silent hearers only; but you will be called upon to interpret passages of an author, and to answer such questions as I shall put to you. No one of you will fail to do this, who is desirous of making a proficiency in his studies; and of that, you will be desirous. In this way we shall reap the benefit of the Socratic method of instruction; while I shall, at the same time, discover the genius of each one of you, and be enabled to

accommodate myself to it. I shall draw out from you all your opinions, both true and false ; the former I shall confirm, and the latter will be eradicated. Every day's task will be first gone over by the elder pupils ; on the succeeding day, the younger ones will repeat it ; and by this method we shall obtain such a familiar acquaintance with an author, that there will be no need of further repetition, but all the pupils will be able to interpret an author together. This is *your* duty. As for *mine*, it consists of so many particulars, that it would be endless to enumerate them ; for it comprehends every thing which appertains to accurate interpretation ; and as you will learn them all by actual experience, it is unnecessary, and might appear ostentatious in me, to dwell upon them in this place. To sum up the whole in a few words ;—it is my endeavor to unite the useful with the agreeable, and in explaining authors, to imbue your minds with a just sense of their real beauties, and by the very pleasure of these exercises, to lead you up to the principles of the language and composition of the Greeks, as they are to be traced either in single words by means of etymologies and analogies, or as they are settled by usage in the construction of sentences.

After this part of your duty comes the task of *repetition* or *reviewing* your studies. This is twofold ; first, on the part of the master (which it is unnecessary here to explain) ; and secondly, on the part of the scholar. *This latter is to be continually practised at home, and HAS AN INCREDIBLE EFFECT IN ASSISTING YOUR PROGRESS ; but it must be a REAL and THOROUGH review ; that is, it must be AGAIN and AGAIN repeated. What I choose is this ; that every day the task of the preceding day should be reviewed ; at the end of every week, the task of the week ; at the end of every month, the studies of the month ; in addition to which, this whole course should be gone over again during the vacations ;* for the review which is thus made in the vacations, being done more deliberately, is of the utmost efficacy in making you thorough scholars, and affords, besides, the greatest satisfaction by making you sensible of your own proficiency, and inciting you to persevere in your studies. For this reason, I have ever been struck with the good sense of our ancestors (among other things) in appointing vacations ; which were intended by them to give opportunity to the professor for recreation of body and mind, and to the pupils for reviewing their studies. Therefore, my estimable young friends, employ yourselves in the exercise of reviewing, and thus carry into effect the intentions of your wise ancestors. Having, then, during the vacation, gone over the whole of your preceding studies, you will anticipate and be prepared to meet those of the succeeding year ; such of you, I mean, as shall again return

to your studies in Greek literature. Nor will those of you, who may leave me and return home, wholly neglect in private the pursuit of this or any other part of learning, and thus consign to oblivion all your acquisitions. On the contrary, you will not fail to devote one hour, or part of an hour at least, every day, to these studies, on the same plan which you have followed under me ; *for there is no business of life, no avocation whatever, which will not permit a man, WHO HAS AN INCLINATION, to give a little time every day to the studies of his youth.* And in case you faithfully keep up this practice of reviewing your Greek studies, I shall, in truth, be the most empty of all boasters, if you do not in a short time acquire such a familiarity with the language, that you will be able to read Greek with just the same facility as Latin authors, or even the writers in any modern language with which you are acquainted. I can truly say, that if I have made any progress myself in Greek learning, I owe it to this practice of reviewing.

It will not be out of place here, to give you some account of my own studies ; for perhaps you may be incited by my example. When I was in my eighteenth year, I had learned about as much Greek as you generally know after being with me four months. I diligently attended the professors, both in literature, and in the more profound parts of knowledge, as we are accustomed to speak ; but all, with very little advantage. I appeared indeed to others to have made some progress, but I did not feel sensible of it myself ; I repented of my labor, and looked around for room to take a higher flight. I returned to my studies, and determined to go over them again under the guidance of my own feelings. I did so ; and indeed advanced in this way somewhat farther than I had done during the period of my attending the professors ; but still I accomplished nothing in comparison with my expectations, and I gave up the whole in disgust. I then went from one study to another, but they were all alike repulsive and irksome ; and yet, like one whose appetite is disordered, I was constantly seeking for some intellectual nutriment. I at length recollected the pleasure which I took, when a boy, in the study of Greek, and I began to look round for some book that I had formerly read. I took down from my shelves the little work of Plutarch on the Education of Children, and read it once. I then went through it a second time. This was truly a task, and was far from affording me any pleasure. From Plutarch I betook myself to Herodian, which gave me rather more pleasure, but still did not satisfy me. Then, as by chance, I met with a copy of Ernesti's edition of the Memorabilia of Xenophon, an author whom I had as yet known merely by name ; and I was wonderfully captivated with the indescribable suavity of that author ; and yet I was not so

fully sensible of his excellence at this time, as I was afterwards. In reading and studying this work, I made it a rule never to begin a section without re-perusing the preceding one; nor a chapter nor book, without going over the preceding chapter and book a second time; and finally, after having finished the work in that manner, I again read the whole in course. This was a labor of almost three months; but such constant repetition proved most beneficial to me. The effect of repetition seemed to be, that when I proceeded from a section or chapter, which I had read twice, to a new one, I acquired an impulse which bore me along through all opposing obstacles; like a vessel, (to use Cicero's comparison in a similar case,) which having once received an impulse from the oar, continues on her course even after the mariners have suspended their exertions to propel her.

I have therefore constantly adhered to this practice of repeating or reviewing. After having thus acquired some knowledge of the Greek language, and by means of Ernesti's short notes become acquainted in some measure with the principles of interpretation as well as with books, I resolved to devote myself to Greek literature; and from that time I commenced the reading of the Greek authors. I began with Homer's *Iliad*, of which, while a boy, I had read about a hundred lines in the first book. I read it at this time in the same manner as I had done Xenophon's *Memorabilia*,—that is, continually repeating each portion that I studied; and I finished the whole in two months. I regretted that I had used Schrevelius; for by following him, I was led into very many errors, to correct which afterwards cost me much time and labor. Oh! that I had then known and enjoyed the benefit of being directed by the light of the Hemsterhusian method, which is now enjoyed in the schools of Holland and is accessible to you; and so much the more sure you may now be of making a proficiency in your studies, as your advantages are greater than mine were in my youth. But to return.

I proceeded with Homer, rather because it was necessary than because I found it agreeable; for I was not yet sensible of the powers of that divine poet. I have known other young persons experience the same thing; the cause of which I afterwards understood, but it would be tiresome here to explain it at large. I therefore took up Xenophon in conjunction with Homer, and gave the greatest portion of my time to his works, which I almost devoured; so easy were they to me, that I was rarely obliged to use a lexicon, for every thing was intelligible from the connexion of the sentence. I had, moreover, a Latin translation, which was of use to me at my age, but never is to boys at school. I thus went through all the works of Xenophon (except the *Memorabilia*) four times in four months. I now



began to think there was no author that would not be easy to me ; and I took up Demosthenes. I had an edition with the Greek text only, accompanied with the Greek notes of Wolfius. Alas ! darkness itself ! But I had learned not to be deterred on the first approach, and I persevered. I found greater difficulties than ever, both in the words and in the extent of the orator's propositions ; but, at last, after much labor, I reached the end of the first Olynthiac. I then read it a second and third time, when every thing appeared clear, but still I found nothing of those powers of eloquence of which we hear so much. I doubted at this time whether I should venture upon another of his orations, or should review again the one which I had just read ; I decided however to review it ; and (how wonderful are the effects of this practice, which can never be sufficiently recommended !) as I read, a new and unknown feeling took possession of my mind. Hitherto in reading the Greek authors, I had experienced only that pleasure which arose from understanding their meaning and the subjects discussed by them, and from observing my own proficiency. But in reading Demosthenes, an unusual and more than human emotion pervaded my mind, and grew stronger upon every successive perusal. I could now see the orator at one time all ardor ; at another, in anguish ; and at another, borne away by an impulse which nothing could resist. As I proceed, the same ardor begins to be kindled within myself, and I am carried away by the same impulse. I feel a greater elevation of soul, and am no longer the same man. I fancy that I am Demosthenes himself standing before the assembly, delivering this oration, and exhorting the Athenians to emulate the bravery and the glory of their ancestors ; and now, I can no longer read the oration silently, as at first, but aloud ; to which I am insensibly impelled, by the strength and fervor of the sentiments, as well as by the power of oratorical harmony.

Pursuing this method, I read almost all the orations of Demosthenes in the course of three months ; and by this means being the better qualified to understand the Grecian writers, I was more than ever delighted with Homer, and soon finished reading him ; after which I employed myself more advantageously upon other authors. The next I began was Plato, with whose works I am persuaded I never should have been so much captivated, if I had not brought to them an ardor, which was ever the more ready to kindle in consequence of the excitement produced by the study of Demosthenes. There is, indeed, in Plato an exuberance and force of genius, tempered with a certain sedateness, yet diversified as well as inexhaustible, which cannot fail to soften and move the most inflexible reader. In Xenophon, it is true, we see a perfect and highly wrought pic-

ture of Socrates ; yet it is but a picture. But in Plato we see Socrates himself in every thing except his material form ; he lives, breathes, speaks and acts ; and invites the reader to participate with him in all he does. I should add, that I was wonderfully aided in understanding him by Ruhnken's observations on Timæus's lexicon, from which I derived all that light which enabled me to perceive the powerful influence of Plato's genius throughout the world of letters. After this I proceeded to all the other classic authors of the first rank, and the philosophers and sophists of the later periods ; not omitting even those of the fathers, whose writings were connected with ancient learning. This whole course of reading, from the time I began Xenophon's Memorabilia, was accomplished in four years ; and I gave an account of it in a letter to Ruhnken, informing him that he had, though without knowing me, been a guide to me in a most efficacious and sure method of study.

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#### ANOTHER VICTIM.

ON the second day of November, 1853, William H. G. Butler fell a victim to Southern chivalry while in the discharge of the duties of his profession. With the details of this affair our readers are already familiar. We have now to record the similar fate of a teacher in Mississippi. This shocking affair occurred in Pontotoc, June 11th, and is described by a correspondent of the N. Y. Evening Post, as follows :—

Professor C. S. Brown, assisted by Rev. M. B. Feemster as associate principal, has for several months had charge of the "Pontotoc Male Academy," and having occasion a few days prior to this fatal event, to discipline, for some misdemeanor, one Cary Wray, a lad of about twelve years of age, inflicted upon him a moderate chastisement. This merited correction called forth a very insolent remark from John, an elder brother, who twice declared to Professor Brown that if he whipped his brother again there would be a *fuss*. This occurring some time in the latter part of the week, no particular notice was taken of it till the school re-assembled on Monday morning, when the sentence of expulsion was pronounced upon him by Mr. Feemster, to whose department he belonged.

The expelled student soon communicated what had happened to his friends at home. What plans were discussed, or what advice given, in the councils of his friends, we know not, but from what quickly followed it is not difficult to conjecture.

Keith Wray, a young man about eighteen years of age, engaged in the study of medicine in one of the medical firms

of this place, entered the office of his preceptors between ten and eleven o'clock, A. M., and in a fit of great excitement asked for pistols. To the inquiry what he wanted of them, he replied, "Give them to me, and you will soon see;" using Brown's name in connection. Failing for some reason to obtain weapons here, he next went to the printing office, where he found three or four of his more intimate associates, from whom he procured a bowie-knife, nine and a half inches in the blade, and a six-barrel pistol, which was then carefully charged for the occasion.

With these weapons of death concealed upon his person, this son of "Southern chivalry," with the pacific advice "to keep the law on his side," set out upon his mission of peace to seek satisfaction at the hands of Brown. Repairing to the academy about twenty minutes before noon, he addressed himself to Mr. Feemster, with the request to tell Prof. B., who occupied an adjoining room, to come out doors, as he wished to settle the difficulty between him and his brother. Mr. F. replied that Brown was busily engaged hearing recitation—besides, the call to settle difficulties appeared to him quite unreasonable. Wray, with some warmth, repeated his demand, saying that he desired "to see him and settle the difficulty now."

Mr. F. observing the state of excitement under which he was laboring, and fearing that he might act rashly, advised him "to go away, become cool, let Reason resume her sway, that you may be able to act like a man." To this salutary advice he warmly replied, "Tell Brown I will see him on his way home and settle the matter with him then." After the close of the school, Wray's request was communicated to Prof. B., and after a short consultation between the teachers, as to the probable design of the young man, they, conscious of having done nothing but their duty, came to the conclusion that no apprehension need be felt, and impressed with this conviction, separated for their respective homes, each taking his own road, leading in different directions.

Professor Brown had not proceeded more than three hundred yards from the academy, about half way across the public park, when he was met by Wray, who had stationed himself in partial concealment by the wayside, and rudely addressed him in the following manner; "You have been imposing on my brother." To which Brown, with great mildness, in substance replied, that in what had been done he had acted in the conscientious and fearless discharge of his duty, and for the justice of his conduct he was "willing to leave it to any reasonable man in town. I will explain the matter to you," said he.

But before time was given for explanation, Wray, regardless

of the advice of his friends to "keep the law on his side," and thirsting for the blood of his victim, angrily uttered the still more insulting words, "you are a d—n dog," and instantly aimed a blow with his fist at the face of Brown, who, with the instruments of death now for the first time revealed to view, saw that his days were numbered, unless by superior strength and activity he could by a single blow strike his antagonist to the earth. Drawing his only weapon of defence, a little riding whip which by chance he had in his pocket, he entered the fearful struggle between life and death.

But alas! how short the conflict! how tragic the result! In an instant the glittering blade flashed in the meridian sun, and soon the ill-fated Brown staggered, and reeled, and fell to the earth a lifeless corpse, pierced with seven horrid wounds.

The above is a summary of the testimony as given by the witnesses of this mournful tragedy. Never was there a deeper feeling of indignation pervading any community than has been awakened here by this melancholy event. The loss of such a man, under such circumstances, and in a community, too, enjoying a high character for sobriety, order and refinement, has produced the most profound sensation. The affair has undergone a thorough investigation in the magistrates' court, and the youth been committed to prison, notwithstanding the vigorous efforts of his friends to forestall justice by promptly securing all the legal counsel the place affords.

Space will not allow me at this time to speak but briefly of the character and many virtues of the deceased. Suffice it to say, that Professor Brown was a native of New Hampshire—a graduate of Dartmouth College—a ripe scholar, a high-toned gentleman and a devoted Christian. In classical and metaphysical attainments he had very few, if any, superiors in this country. In the cause of education he was quite an enthusiast, and had devoted something over twenty years of his life in the business of teaching.

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#### HIGH SCHOOL IN WAYLAND, MASSACHUSETTS.

WE recently enjoyed the pleasure of a visit to the High School which has been established in the town of Wayland. A brief history of this school will be of service to many of the towns in this State, if they are disposed to profit by an example of enterprise and liberality. The population of Wayland is about one thousand. The pursuits of the people are chiefly agricultural. The amount of wealth is small, even when compared with other towns of the same size. The total valuation



of the town in 1850 was \$479,000. The territory is unfavorably situated for the accommodation of the inhabitants in one central High School. The extreme length of the town is not less than six or seven miles, while the average breadth is not more than two, or at most not more than two and a half miles. It will be observed that the *law* does not oblige the people of Wayland to establish a High School. At the regular town meeting in the spring of 1854, the subject of abolishing the district system and of grading the schools was submitted to the people. This measure would, of course, involve the establishment of a High School. The proposition was carried, though not without the vigorous opposition which usually attends the adoption of any new measures in the cause of education. At a subsequent meeting an attempt was made to reconsider the vote of the previous meeting, but without success. A committee was appointed with almost unlimited powers to build a school-house for the accommodation of the High School. This committee took liberal views of the work which was assigned to them. They had regard, not merely to the present, but to the future wants of the town; they took into consideration, not merely what "*would do*," but acted with reference to the demands of a truly higher education. One of the pleasantest spots in the village was selected, and on it was erected, after careful deliberation, a school-house, at an expense of not less than \$6000; of a style of external architecture which renders it an ornament to the town, and with internal accommodations which will compare favorably with those of any other High School-house in the State. As might have been expected, this policy adopted by the building committee exposed them to the severe censure of those who had opposed the establishment of the school. The organization of the school, however, was completed in accordance with these generous and enlightened views, and it went into practical operation in the early part of December last, under the care of Erastus N. Fay, Esq., a recent graduate of Dartmouth College. We have deemed these statements of sufficient importance to occupy a place in our pages, knowing, as we do, that a very different course has been pursued in many towns in the State, and with entirely unsatisfactory results. When a High School is first established, in many places it is not unfrequently the case that the "town hall" is appropriated to it, or it may be that a private room is at first leased for its accommodation, and the experiment begins under circumstances which can present no hope of its ultimate success. We are quite conscious that something more than a good school-house is requisite to make a good school. We have seen excellent discipline and culture within walls in no way favorable for securing these results; and we have

seen listlessness, indifference, and confusion, where all around seemed calculated to inspire and elevate the youthful mind. There may be found, we doubt not, within many a mud-walled cottage, more of order, cleanliness, and true Christian civilization, than can be seen in many a mansion whose exterior seems to promise the highest degree of refinement, and where there ought to exist the highest degree of virtue. It would, however, be poor logic to infer from these facts that it is at all a matter of indifference whether a school-house be well or ill suited to the purposes to which it is devoted. It is of the highest importance, in order that a school may be successful, that it be properly accommodated. How often is the discipline of the school complained of, when, if effects were carefully traced to their causes, it would be found that the school-house was the source of all the trouble. How often is the teacher required to enforce the observance of order and of moral law, in violation of some of the fundamental laws of our physical natures.

The people of Wayland, in making liberal provisions at the outset for the comfortable accommodation of their children at school, have acted economically and wisely. Can any doubt that in ten years, if the High School be carried on in the spirit in which it has been begun, the town will be far richer than if it had never been established? It should not, however, be forgotten that a most important work remains yet to be accomplished. It is not difficult in the first gust of enthusiasm which attends any important movement in a country town, to receive a high degree of success; but it often happens, after the novelty and excitement have passed, that no interest can be aroused, and that which was commenced with energy is continued only with indifference, and finally ends with disappointment, and it may be even with disgrace. It remains to be seen whether the people of Wayland will go on with what they have so nobly begun; whether the adjoining towns, incited by their example, shall be encouraged to do likewise; or whether the failure of their experiment shall prove a warning to their less enterprising neighbors. The friends of education in Wayland should remember that the time of sternest trial is yet to come. A few years of persevering effort will place their school beyond the reach of opposition, and render it a blessing and an ornament to the community.

We cannot but notice briefly, in this connection, another important means of education enjoyed by the inhabitants of Wayland. A few years since, Dr. Wayland, president of Brown University, offered to the town five hundred dollars for the establishment of a town library, on condition that an equal sum should be raised by the inhabitants of the town. The donation was gratefully accepted, and the result has been that the

largest and best selected town library which we have ever seen is placed at their disposal. This library has been most admirably managed, and has a very extensive circulation among the people. We hope that the High School and the library will never lose their hold upon the affections or pockets of the people.

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THE CLAIMS OF CLASSICAL CULTURE *upon the attention of American Teachers and American Schools. A Lecture delivered before the American Institute of Instruction, at Providence, R. I., Aug. 9th, 1854. By Elbridge Smith, A. M., Master of the High School, Cambridge, Mass. Cambridge: Thurston & Torrey. 1855.*

THE title of the lecture noticed above, does not give a clear idea of the author's subject, or, rather, of his manner of treating it. While he uses the general term *classical culture*, his chief aim is to present the claims of the *English* classics upon the attention of American teachers and American schools. The subject thus viewed is comparatively new. At the eighth annual meeting of the Mass. Teachers' Association, held at New Bedford, Nov., 1852, a very able and interesting lecture was given by Prof. Felton, of Harvard University, on "The English Language, as a Branch of Study in our Common Schools." More recently still, Mr. Smith, of the Cambridge High School, has presented the same subject in a highly acceptable manner, before several of the county associations in the State: and in the lecture we are noticing, he has treated the subject so ably and with such fulness and clearness of illustration, that, on one side at least, he has left nothing to be said.

It is not our design to enter into a criticism, or give an analysis of the lecture. No analysis for which we have either time or space, would do justice to the author, or answer the purpose for which the lecture was intended. Our object simply is to acquaint the readers of the "Teacher" with the fact of its publication, that those who had the pleasure of hearing it may have the double pleasure of studying it at their leisure; and that all teachers may be informed where they can find the claims of the English classics discussed with marked ability by one of the most accomplished and successful teachers of the State.

We have said that the subject is comparatively new; but it is not to be inferred that it is, therefore, a crude, unpractised theory. When, in 1852, Prof. Felton gave the lecture to which we have already alluded, he pointed with pride to the Cambridge High School, where his views had been in successful operation for a considerable length of time. So far as we know,

Mr. Smith's school was the first to embrace in its curriculum, a thorough and systematic study of the best authors in our language.

In the Cambridge School Report for 1854, we find the following works and authors laid down in the course of study for the High School. Scott's Poetical Works, Longfellow's *Evangeline*, Campbell's *Pleasures of Hope*, Goldsmith's *Traveller* and *Deserted Village*, Milton, Everett's *Orations*, Webster and Hayne. These works are not merely read over hastily and without care, but, we have reason to believe, are thoroughly *studied* and thoroughly *taught*. Every pupil is required to learn a minute and correct analysis of the poem or work in hand. All the allusions, historical, classical, and geographical, must be carefully looked up; every peculiarity of expression is discussed, and the attention of the pupil directed to all the beauties and niceties of the language. It needs no argument, we think, to prove that such a course of study and instruction must be of immense advantage to the child. When we think of the opportunities which we enjoyed, or rather did not enjoy, of acquiring a knowledge of the English language, we look with feelings of envy, we fear, upon those so much more highly blessed. And if one thing more than another makes us sigh for the return of our school-boy days, it is that we might receive the benefit of just such a course of reading as that now pursued in the Cambridge High School.

But this training Mr. Smith would not confine to the higher schools alone. "The range of classical reading in our own vernacular is sufficiently extended to meet the wants of all grades of our public schools. No child can be found in an American school-room so young as to be beneath the influence which may be derived from some of the great masters of language and thought. The child who is taught, and taught rightly, a hymn of Mrs. Barbauld or Dr. Watts, becomes as really a classical scholar, as he who has studied all the literature which was produced in the city of Minerva."

Whether classical culture can be carried to this extent, we are not yet prepared to give a decided opinion. It is certain, however, that, so far as the experiment has been tried, it has met with entire success. The subject is well worthy the attention of teachers; and we commend to their consideration the able exposition of it by Mr. Smith, whose lecture we regard as one of the best ever delivered before the American Institute of Instruction.

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BERKSHIRE COUNTY TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION.

A report of the last meeting of this Association will appear in our next number.



## Resident Editors' Table.

GEORGE ALLEN, Jr., . . . Boston. } RESIDENT EDITORS. { ELBRIDGE SMITH, Cambridge.  
C. J. CAPEN, . . . . . Dedham. } E. S. STEARNS, . . Framingham.

### THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF INSTRUCTION.

THE 26th Annual Meeting of the American Institute of Instruction, will be held in Bath, Me., on the 21st, 22d, and 23d days of August. Lectures will be delivered by Professor Taylor Lewis, LL. D., of Union College, Schenectady, Rev. G. Reynolds, of West Roxbury, Mass., Rev. F. D. Huntington, of Boston, Prof. B. F. Tweed, of Tufts College, Somerville, Mass., Prof. J. G. Hoyt, of Exeter, N. H.

Discussions will be held on the following questions:—

1. Ought the State to furnish its Citizens with Free Collegiate Education?

2. The Relative Importance of Classical and Scientific Studies in the American System of Education.

An able Reporter has been engaged, and a full account of the meeting may be expected in the October number of the "Teacher."

### LITERARY INTELLIGENCE.

WE seem just at this time to be reaping an abundant harvest of Geographies. In no one department of common school instruction has the deficiency of suitable text-books been greater than in geography. But within a few months, several new ones have made their appearance, and we notice announcements of others which may soon be expected. We have received specimen sheets of the following:

"A New Series of School Geographies, published by J. H. Colton & Co., N. Y." This Series comprises the following parts:

1st. "Colton and Fitch's Primary Geography—A Treatise for the Younger Class of Scholars."

2d. "The Common School Geography."

3d. "The American School Geography."

We notice in the cartography of these works a decided improvement. There is no department in which we are more deficient than in the execution of maps. We ought to be willing to put up with many deficiencies in other respects, provided we can have *really good maps*.

The publishers of the above volumes also announce "Outlines of Physical Geography, by George W. Fitch, Esq. Illustrated by six maps and numerous engravings."

Hickling, Swan & Brown, of Boston, will shortly publish

a work on Physical and Political Geography, by Cornelius S. Cartee, Esq., of Charlestown.

Cowperthwait, Desilver & Co., of Philadelphia, have also in press a text-book on Physical Geography. We should also mention that the Appletons of New York have also in course of publication another series of Geographies by Miss S. S. Cornell. Of this series two numbers have appeared.

Lastly, Phillips & Sampson, of Boston, have published "My First Geography for Children; by Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe." This is also the first of a series, and is every way worthy of the attention of teachers.

Mr. A. R. Dunton has prepared a set of copies, consisting of sixty-four numbers, with the view of making his system more complete.

Mr. Dunton's system is becoming daily more popular with teachers in and near Boston, and we hope soon to see it generally introduced. It is recommended by the Principals of the Boston Latin and English High Schools, *and by all who have used it.*

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### ROXBURY SCHOOLS.

WE have received the printed report of the School Committee of the city of Roxbury, together with the general report submitted by the chairman of the Committee, Hon. Bradford K. Pierce. Mr. Pierce, in the course of his report, alludes to the fact that during the past year the system of public education in Roxbury has been completed by the establishment of a High School for girls, which is now in a state of successful experiment. The increase in the annual school expense of the city has been very slight, notwithstanding the addition of this provision for the highest culture of female youth, the superintendency of the grammar schools for girls having been placed in the hands of ladies, and the expense thus decreased to an amount nearly equivalent to the sum required for the High School for girls. The report says that the new lady principals "have succeeded admirably in their responsible positions. The plan is considered no longer an experiment, but a well-established policy; and, while it has the recommendation of economy, it offers a higher recompense and a worthier field of development for the sex than she has been accustomed to receive." During the past year, a grammar school for girls, upon Gore avenue, and two primary buildings, each containing four schools, have been added to the public property of the city.

The report states that it is desirable to raise, as soon as practicable, the standard of the grammar schools of the city. The higher the standard of graduation there, the greater will be

the benefit that the pupil will receive from his High School training. It also speaks of the importance of employing a general superintendent of schools, appointed from within or without the School Committee, and states that it may be advisable for the School Committee to take measures at an early day for bringing before the City Council the question of constituting the Mayor of the city *ex-officio* chairman of that body.

The Latin and English High Schools maintain the high position which they have always held among schools of corresponding rank and character in the community. All the youth of the city, of suitable qualifications, have free access to them, the city paying annually such an amount as may be required, above the income of the fund, to meet the current expenses. About two thousand and six hundred scholars attended the free public schools of Roxbury during the three months ending the 25th of May last.—*Boston Journal*.

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### THE NORMAL SCHOOL IN WESTFIELD.

FROM a catalogue of the State Normal School at Westfield, we learn that the number of students who have been instructed in that institution during the past year is one hundred and eighty-three, of whom forty-two were males, and one hundred and forty-one females. The number of graduates this year is thirty-six, one-third of whom are males. The Westfield school, it will be remembered, was opened at Westfield in 1844, and has since then been under the charge successively of Rev. Dr. Emerson Davis, of David S. Rowe, A. M., of Mr. John W. Dickinson, and of Mr. W. H. Wells, A. M. Mr. Wells is the present Principal, and under his superintendence it maintains a high character for thoroughness.—*Boston Journal*.

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ARITHMETIC AND ITS APPLICATIONS; *designed as a Text Book for Common Schools, High Schools and Academies.* By Dana P. Colburn, Principal of the Rhode Island State Normal School, Providence. Philadelphia: H. Cowperthwait & Co.

WE have been favored with an inspection in proof of some two hundred pages of this work, and we feel justified in asserting that for accuracy, clearness of expression, and copiousness and good arrangement of materials, it excels all arithmetical works that have been published. From what is well known of Mr. Colburn's enthusiasm in his favorite subject, his numerous friends expect from him a useful work, and they will not be disappointed. We hope to give it a more extended notice when it shall appear from the press.

## MATHEMATICAL.

ERRATA. On page 220, line 11, after the word "any," the word "rational" should be inserted. The sentence would then read as follows: — "Now  $p$  may have any rational value," &c.

On page 222, line 10, read  $\frac{2}{3}$  instead of  $\frac{2}{31}$ . Same page, line 31, read "numerator" instead of "number." In justice to the writers of the articles, we would say that these are not errors of the manuscript, and that they were corrected in proof by the Local Editors. Nor are we at all inclined to find fault with the proof-reader connected with the establishment of Messrs. Damrell & Moore, whose almost infallible accuracy and good judgment have been conspicuous upon the pages of this Journal for years, and in whose hands we have always deemed the "TEACHER" perfectly safe.

## PRIZE ESSAYS.

THE MASSACHUSETTS TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION offers the following prizes for original Essays:

TO MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION, for the best Essay, on either of the following subjects, a prize of TWENTY-FIVE DOLLARS.

1. The Relation of the Common School to the State.
2. School Supervision.
3. The Relation which the Common School sustains to the College and the University.

TO THE FEMALE TEACHERS of the State, for the best Essay on either of the following subjects, a prize of TWENTY-FIVE DOLLARS.

1. Primary School Instruction, and the Methods of Teaching Young Children.
2. The True Mission of the Teacher.
3. The Objects of Common School Instruction.

The Essays must be forwarded to the Secretary, Charles J. Capen, Esq., Latin School, Boston, on or before the 21st of October. Each Essay should be accompanied by a sealed envelope enclosing the name of the writer. The envelopes accompanying unsuccessful Essays will not be opened. The prizes will be awarded by an impartial committee; but no prize will be awarded to an Essay that is not deemed worthy of one.

The successful Essays will be regarded as the property of the Association.

JOSIAH A. STEARNS, *President.*

*Boston, June 18th, 1855.*